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INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO

FCO PERSONAL FOR MR N R BLOOMFIELD DUSS, AND HEADS OF PUSD, AND SECURITY POLICY DEPARTMENT, AND WED.

UKDEL NATO PERSONAL FOR SIR M ALEXANDER

UKDEL NATO TELNO 80 TO FCO AND YOUR TELNO 28 TO UKDEL NATO:
OPERATION GLADIO

SUMMARY

1. ACTION BY ANDREOTTI ON THE SHAPE DIRECTIVE OBSCURE HERE, AND HIS POLITICAL ADVISER TURNS ELUSIVE.

DETAIL

2. THE GULF WAR HAS IN RECENT WEEKS DIVERTED PUBLIC ATTENTION FROM THE GLADIO SAGA. BUT PRESIDENT COSSIGA'S REQUEST TO SOSFCA ON 11 FEBRUARY FOR DETAILS OF UK STAY BEHIND MEASURES IN 1964 (MY INTERNAL MINUTE OF 13 FEBRUARY, COPIED TO WED) SHOWED THAT COSSIGA REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT IT. ANDREOTTI'S APPARENT INTENTION TO RELEASE THE SHAPE DIRECTIVE, DESPITE ANY EMBARRASSMENT TO ALLIES, IS A FURTHER INDICATION THAT THE AFFAIR IS STILL POTENTIALLY ALIGHT IN ITALIAN DOMESTIC TERMS. ANDREOTTI WOULD NOT (NOT) TAKE SUCH A STEP LIGHTLY.

3. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY SUBPOENA AS DESCRIBED BY FULCI. VATTANI, ANDREOTTI'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, TOLD ME ON 18 FEBRUARY THAT NO SUBPOENA HAD BY THEN BEEN SERVED. IT IS CERTAINLY POSSIBLE THAT ONE OF THE SEVERAL INVESTIGATING MAGISTRATES NOW PURSUING INDEPENDENT BUT OVERLAPPING ENQUIRIES INTO ASPECTS OF GLADIO HAS ISSUED OR INTENDS TO ISSUE ONE. BUT IF SO THE PRESS DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE PICKED THIS UP. HOWEVER IF THE MAGISTRATE AND/OR THE TWO PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONS, DO SECURE ACCESS TO THE DIRECTIVE, THE CHANCES OF PREVENTING LEAKS ARE, ON PAST FORM IN THIS AFFAIR, LOW TO MINIMAL.

4. HAVING LIFTED ALL DOMESTIC SECURITY CAVEATS OVER GLADIO, ANDREOTTI COULD ONLY REFUSE RELEASE OF THE SHAPE DOCUMENT ON THE GROUNDS OF UNACCEPTABILITY TO ALLIES. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, HE HAS ALREADY DONE THIS OVER AN AGREEMENT IN THE LATE FIFTIES BETWEEN THE ITALIAN SECRET SERVICE AND THE CIA, UNDER WHICH A PRECURSOR STAY BEHIND NETWORK WAS ESTABLISHED IN ITALY. HIS PREFERENCE FOR RELEASE IN THIS CASE SUGGESTS THAT THIS IS IN HIS VIEW NOW THE ONLY WAY TO DEFUSE THE AFFAIR. HE MAY OF COURSE ALSO BE AIMING TO DESTABILIZE COSSIGA, SINCE MANY BELIEVE ANDREOTTI NOW HOPES TO BE

THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF ITALY (TERM EXPIRES JULY 1992).

5. ON 18 FEBRUARY I ALSO TOLD VATTANI (WHO SEEMED UNSIGHTED ON WHETHER THE DIRECTIVE HAD BEEN RELEASED BY ANDREOTTI OR NOT AND, DESPITE PROMISES, HAS FAILED TO GET BACK TO ME ON THE MATTER) THAT GIVEN THE LIKELIHOOD OF PRESS LEAKS IT WOULD BE BETTER IF HIS BOSS DID NOT RELEASE THE DIRECTIVE BUT SIMPLY REFRESHED HIS MIND ON ITS TERMS AND DREW FROM IT ORALLY IF UNAVOIDABLE.

6. I WILL OF COURSE REPORT AGAIN IF AND WHEN VATTANI SPARKS, OR THERE ARE PRESS LEAKS.

EGERTON

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